

378 COLE  
C689

EGYPTIAN TAPESTRY

NK3088

.A1

C65

1889

Gaylord Bros.  
Makers  
Syracuse, N. Y.  
PAT. JAN. 21, 1908

SOCIETY FOR THE ENCOURAGEMENT  
OF  
ARTS, MANUFACTURES, AND COMMERCE.

*1218 Connection*

---

CANTOR LECTURES  
ON  
EGYPTIAN TAPESTRY.

BY  
ALAN S. COLE.

DELIVERED BEFORE THE SOCIETY, JANUARY 21 & 28, 1889.

---

LONDON:  
PRINTED BY W. TROUNCE, 10, GOUGH-SQUARE, FLEET-STREET, LONDON, E.C.

1889.

*Price One Shilling.*

THE LIBRARY  
OF THE CLEVELAND  
MUSEUM OF ART

PRESENTED BY

MISS MARTHA J. FENDERSON

SOCIETY FOR THE ENCOURAGEMENT  
OF  
ARTS, MANUFACTURES, AND COMMERCE.

*Thomas Wilson,*

---

1218 Connecticut Ave.,  
WASHINGTON, D. C.

CANTOR LECTURES  
ON  
EGYPTIAN TAPESTRY.

BY  
ALAN S. COLE.

DELIVERED BEFORE THE SOCIETY, JANUARY 21 & 28, 1889.

---

LONDON:  
PRINTED BY W. TROUNCE, 10, GOUGH-SQUARE, FLEET-STREET, LONDON, E.C.

1889.



# EGYPTIAN TAPESTRY.

ALAN S. COLE

LECTURE I.—DELIVERED JANUARY 11, 1904.

## SYLLABUS.

---

### LECTURE I.

Textiles discovered at Akhmîm in Upper Egypt—Varieties of patterns in them, showing successive influences—Greek—Græco-Roman—Syrian—Christian-Coptic; Sketch of Egyptian intercourse with foreign countries from end of 26th (Saite) dynasty to Arab invasion 7th century, A.D.; Simple weaving in Egypt—Shaggy-faced textiles compared with the Greek *Kaunakes* and Roman *Gausapum*—Embroidered linens; Tapestry-weaving process described by Ovid, and used by inhabitants of Akhmîm for decoration of costumes—Corresponding use of same process by natives of Peru during the Inca Empire—Silk specimens from Akhmîm.

### LECTURE II.

Complete robes and cloths found at Akhmîm—Tunics of early Egyptians, of Hebrews and Syrians—Greek and Roman tunics—Ornamented bands, &c., on Akhmîm tunics—Various shapes of bands or *clavi*, of squares and roundels, *tabulæ adjunctæ*, and *caliculæ* compared with those on costume shown in the wall paintings of Roman catacombs—Ravenna mosaics of Empress Theodora, &c.—Typical ornaments from Akhmîm compared with similar motives at Kermanchah—Persepolis—Cyprus—and in Roman mosaics from Constantine, Algeria—Barcelona, Spain—Christian symbols—Byzantine styles—Conclusion.

# SYLLABUS

## LECTURE I

Textiles discovered at Akhmim in Upper Egypt—Varieties of patterns in them, showing successive influences—Greek—Coptic—Roman—Syrian—Christian—Coptic; Sketch of Egyptian intercourse with foreign countries from end of sixth (Sassanid) dynasty to Arab invasion 7th century, A.D.; Simple weaving in Egypt—Shaggy-faced textiles compared with the Greek Akroteria and Roman Campana—Kiln-baked linens; Tapestry-weaving process described by Ovid, and used by inhabitants of Akhmim for decoration of costumes—Corresponding use of same process by natives of Persia during the Sassanid—Still specimen from Akhmim.

## LECTURE II

Complete robes and cloths found at Akhmim—Tunics of early Egyptians, of Hebrews and Syrians—Greek and Roman tunics—Ornamented bands, &c., on Akhmim tunics—Various shapes of bands on tunic of apurges and roundels, tunic of tunic, and tunic compared with those on costume shown in the wall paintings of Roman catacombs—Ravenna mosaics of Empress Theodora, &c.—Typical ornaments from Akhmim compared with similar motifs in Isterian mosaics—Tunic—Coptic and in Roman mosaics from Constantinople, Aigai—Basilica, Spain—Christian symbols—Byzantine style—Conclusion.

# EGYPTIAN TAPESTRY.

BY

ALAN S. COLE.

*LECTURE I.—DELIVERED JANUARY 21, 1889.*

The discovery near Akhmîm, in Upper Egypt, of burial grounds, from which a number of ornamental textiles have been taken, was, I believe, made within the last seven or eight years by Monsieur Maspero, the well-known archæologist and Oriental scholar, who has but recently resigned his direction of the Museum at Boulak. The first results of this discovery were lodged in that museum. Later ones have found their way to the Louvre, to Vienna, and to museums in England, Scotland, Ireland, and Germany. But, as far as I know, no more complete and representative collection of such Akhmîm textiles is to be seen than that at the South Kensington Museum. It is from this collection, therefore, that the photographs of specimens have been made which I shall have the pleasure of bringing before you in the course of the two Cantor lectures with the delivery of which the Society of Arts has entrusted me. Shedding new light upon the employment of certain most ancient processes of weaving, which in modified forms are in use at the present day, this South Kensington collection of Egyptian textiles also illustrates survivals and modifications of very old ornamental motives and designs. The why and the wherefore of these survivals and modifications are involved in conditions of people about whom very precise historic records are few and scattered. At the same time the range of events to explain these conditions is so extensive that, within the present limits, I cannot pretend to examine it adequately, or fairly to display it to you. I must, therefore, ask you to kindly regard my remarks as bare suggestions, and if fortunately they give rise to much more definite knowledge, I shall feel that I have not played falsely with you or my subject.

The title, "Egyptian Tapestry," under which my lectures have been announced, allows a wide scope. Some, no doubt, may

have concluded that I would deal with the decorative wall hangings usually called tapestries, and solely with such of them as were made by the Egyptians. This, however, is not what I intend doing. For so far as the Egyptians are concerned, I propose to start from a date long after the exodus of the Israelites from Egypt, at which time the government of Egypt had passed through nearly eighteen dynasties, covering a period of probably 3,500 years. Whilst as regards tapestries, I have to deal with those found near Akhmîm, almost all of which are parts of costumes and cloths, few, if any, being wall hangings. The earliest of them, I think, does not date before Græco-Roman times in Egypt, or some time about the first and second centuries B.C. It may be right, however, to bear in mind that the peoples who made these things—some, possibly, 2,000 years ago—lived in a land in which, notwithstanding foreign invasions and internal strifes, there had been for thousands of years previously a continuity in beliefs, customs, handicrafts, &c. The system of government of Egypt appears to have varied but little under the different dynasties. The native as distinct from the foreign, dynasties indicate the supremacy at particular times of one or other of rulers of the the Egyptian provinces; and native dynasties seem to have assisted one another in perpetuating national traditions and usages. The provinces of Egypt, whence the native dynasties arose, corresponded with our counties; and Thinite, Memphite, Tanite Saite, and kindred dynasties would have found a parallel with regnal families of this country had there been a constant succession of Kentish, Northumbrian, Cornish, and such like English dynasties.

The condition of the town of Akhmîm at the present day, with its 18,000 inhabitants, its bazaar, market place, and walls, may not, perhaps, be very different from what it was

when known as "Ap, the abode of Khem," or later as Panopolis in the times of the Greek and Roman dominations. The burial places discovered by Monsieur Maspero are sandy wastes some three miles from the town. The textiles taken from them, I think, tell us that they belonged to inhabitants of Akhmîm and its district, who were subject to Greek, Græco-Roman, Syrian, Arabic, and Christian influences as these arose. The cemeteries were then preserved according to the traditional reverence for such places.

And here it may be convenient to display a rough map of Egypt and adjacent countries, noting their positions and those of certain towns. Migrations were made at various epochs to Egypt by the desert east of the Delta, from Assyria and Palestine, and from Persia. Arabs passed across the Red Sea. Greeks and Romans came over the Mediterranean. The positions of Babylon, Shushan, Persepolis, Ecbatana, Palmyra, and Alexandria are roughly indicated, as I shall have occasion to mention these centres.

Akhmîm was one of the many important towns along the Nile—that great highway of communication between Northern and Southern or Lower and Upper Egypt. It is on the left bank of the river as you go upstream, and is about halfway between Assiout on the north and Thebes on the south. Syene, further south, was the boundary town of Upper Egypt, adjoining the land of the Ethiopians. Akhmîm, or Panopolis, as it was called in the Grecian times, was, Strabo tells us, noted for the productions of its weavers. In Egyptian houses generally, weavers were employed as commonly as cooks are with us. Distinction, therefore, in the art of weaving, which called for a special mention by the historian, must have implied a high degree of skill which survived for a long time, as the quality and ingenuity of the Akhmîm weavings prove. To this day Akhmîm has a reputation for weaving check cotton cloths. These, however, are quite different from what we are going to examine.

A picture of the typical Egyptian weaver is presented in a writing of the 12th dynasty, about 3,000 years B.C., and might almost apply now. Monsieur Maspero's translation of it is as follows:—"The weaver in the inner rooms of the house is more unfortunate than a woman. His knees are cramped up to his breast. He never tastes the free air. If for a single day he fails to make the full quantity of material required by regulation, he is bound together like the lotus of the swamps. Only by gifts of

bread to the door porter can he steal a glimpse of open daylight." When I come to speak of the peculiarities of the textiles themselves I shall again have to refer to the weavers.

I will now very lightly touch upon the relations between Egyptians and other peoples, like Greeks, Syrians, and Romans, commencing a hundred years previously to Herodotus's visit to Egypt. This would place us in the reign of Ahmes, or Amasis, the last king of the 26th or Saite dynasty, which was followed in 527 B.C. by the Persian dynasty, established by Cambyses. It was Ahmes who granted great privileges to Greeks coming to settle in and trade with Egypt. His liberal concessions to the Greeks enabled them to found and develop the town of Naukratis,\* west of the Delta, which for many subsequent centuries was noted for Greek culture and manners. He also authorised Greek merchants to establish themselves elsewhere; thus temples to Greek gods and houses of business were set up in several Egyptian towns. At one, the Æginetans built a temple to Zeus; at another, the Milesians one to Apollo; at a third, the Samians erected one to Hera. Nine towns of Asia Minor co-operated in raising the Hellenion. "Upper Egypt," says Maspero, "and even the desert was not exempt from this kind of pacific invasion. Greek merchants speedily perceived the importance of having agents along the routes of the caravans coming from the interior of Africa. Milesians fixed themselves at the ancient city of Abydos, and certain of the Samians pushed as far as the great oasis." The natives of Panopolis or Akhmîm, according to Herodotus, showed no abhorrence of Greek customs, and actually adopted many of them. And yet in other parts of the Thebaid the presence of strangers like the Greeks surprised the natives, fomenting the hatred they entertained towards King Ahmes, whom they regarded as a usurper. The Greeks on their side brought back to their fellow countrymen wonderful tales concerning the distant regions they had penetrated, and excited cupidity at home by the sight of the riches, &c., they displayed on their return. Amongst these riches, no doubt, were Egyptian weavings; and at that early period we may perhaps, without a stretch of imagination, picture some Greek agents inducing Egyptian weavers to produce patterns more in accord with Greek taste than those which appealed to the sentiments of the

\* Identified by Mr. Flinders Petrie with Tell-el-Bareet, near the Rosetta branch of the Nile.

Egyptians only. Ahmes, or Amasis, sent one or two notable gifts of woven corslets to the Greeks. One, described by Herodotus, had "a vast number of animals inwoven into its fabric." In my lecture of the 12th April, 1886, I alluded to these corslets, and showed that they were probably woven after the manner of the tapestry-weaving process. Older still, by 700 years, is a corslet painted on the tomb of Rameses III. at Thebes. This, too, was no doubt of the same process of manufacture.

That the Greeks were acquainted with this particular method of inweaving coloured figures and ornament into materials is proved by specimens which were found in the Tomb of the Seven Brothers at Temriouck, formerly a Greek settlement in the province of Kouban, on the north-eastern shores of the Black Sea. Here is a fragment of one of the Kouban specimens. The tomb and its other contents, gold-work, &c., have been identified with the 3rd or 4th centuries, B.C. In the fragment before us, we have a powdered pattern of ducks, woven in coloured threads into the material surrounding them, and thus forming part of the whole fabric. The second specimen is of two bands or small strips of ornament, woven in the same way. These extraordinarily interesting specimens are most valuable links in the history of this particular process of weaving. As they were made within a hundred years or so of the period when Herodotus described the Egyptian corslets, it seemed more appropriate to refer to them now, than to reserve them for a later stage in the lecture when we have to deal with identically similar fabrics, but of different patterns, from Akhmîm.

As I said, the Saite dynasty, of which Ahmes was the last sovereign, was succeeded by a Persian dynasty under Cambyses. The Persian dynasty lasted for a hundred years, during which the Greeks remained allies of the Egyptians, aiding them to a large extent to recover their independence; this they maintained, however, for two brief native dynasties only, when the Persians, in 340 B.C., again conquered Egypt, holding dominion over her for seven or eight years. At this time Alexander had been prosecuting his wars in Persia, and finally vanquishing his opponent, Darius III., at Issus, in Syria, he marched southwards, on to Egypt, and proceeded to Memphis, which was then the centre of Egyptian Government. Alexander set to work to found the Ptolemaic or Greek domination of Egypt. From Memphis he passed down the river by the main western branch of

the Nile, and having reached the Mediterranean he coasted in a south-westerly direction, and landed at the town of Rhacotis, which possessed natural advantages as a harbour. He decided to have a Greek town here, which shortly developed into the historic city of Alexandria, and superseded Memphis as the seat of Government. As principal port of Egypt it contributed vastly to the extension of Egyptian commerce with Greece, the Syrian coast, and Asia Minor, Italy, and especially Rome. Another event of some importance connected with Alexander's assumption of the government of Egypt, was his sending into Upper Egypt a body of seven thousand Samaritans, whose quarrels with the Jews made them glad to leave their own country. About a hundred years after this the Romans began to assert their influence in Egypt, which although nominally under the Ptolemies thenceforward became a Roman province. Monsieur Eugene Muntz, quoting from Athenæus, says, "Alexander's successors surpassed even him in a magnificence more Asiatic than Grecian in character. Alexandria became a noted centre for the revival of textile art. New scope was given to all branches of tapestry by the luxury displayed in the reign of Ptolemy Philadelphus. Splendid hangings depicting the portraits of kings or the stories of mythology, glistened in his dining-hall. Long-haired carpets, of fine purple-dyed wool, were spread before the couches alternately with short wrapped Persian rugs, ornamented with animal forms and other designs." The reign of the Ptolemies was brought to an end upon the defeat of Cleopatra by the Romans, at the battle of Actium, and Roman prefects were then appointed in Egypt. This course of conquest and changing Governments, which I have so hastily sketched, interfered with but did not completely paralyse the practice of the arts in Egypt, although "a vast number of sculptors, painters, and handicraftsmen of every description (including, of course, weavers), had been taken by Cambyses, about 525 B.C., from their country, and sent to Persia" to work. And this is an incident worth remembering in regard to certain weavings mentioned by Plutarch, which I shall refer to later on.

Trade continued its traffic up and down the Nile, and across the desert. Arabian and Indian goods destined for Alexandria, Greece, and Rome, came from Persia across Arabia, and were shipped westward over the Red Sea to ports like Berenice, not

far distant from Suakim. Thence they were carried by caravans across the desert to Coptos, which is about sixty miles south of Akhmîm. At Coptos the merchandise was placed on boats to proceed down the Nile, northwards. Greek and Roman wares destined for Egypt, Arabia, and India, travelled in an opposite direction over the same routes. Influences from such commerce would naturally communicate themselves at a place of the importance of Akhmîm, as well as elsewhere.

Notwithstanding that Egyptian types of ornament and architecture survived throughout the Ptolemaic and Roman dominations, and that Greek and Roman governors caused buildings to be erected in such styles, merely marking them with Greek inscriptions, it does not follow that an equally strict observance of Egyptian styles was respected in the minor arts. Greek and Roman patterns, as we shall see, were plentifully used in weaving—probably some years before Græco-Roman designs were employed for buildings and mosaics in Egypt, of which there are well-known examples assigned to the 1st and 2nd centuries A.D.

When, for instance, would such a specimen as the one now shown have been made? It comes from the Akhmîm burial grounds; it was the neck trimming of a robe. Its shape is more like that of most ancient Egyptian than that of Roman neck trimmings. The ornament, a repetition of anthemions or popularly termed honeysuckle devices, is, I venture to say, of pure Greek character. There is no trace of those florid forms in which the radiations of this favourite device were subsequently rendered. Of course, it is possible that it may be only an out-of-date survival. On the other hand, it is one of a great number of specimens which display varieties of ornament that appear to have succeeded one another throughout a long range of time.

In other things, Roman influence, as Dr. Birch has pointed out, is noticeable. Jars and vases for wine and milk were often shaped like Roman *olla*. Again, the god Bes, adopted in Egypt from Arabia, has been represented in the dress of a Roman soldier. Conversely, the Romans cultivated a taste for Egyptian decorations, &c., when Augustus, on his return from Alexandria, publicly displayed, in Rome, Egyptian treasures, ornaments, and trophies; when obelisks began to be set up in Rome; when the worship of Isis and its foreign ritual became fashionable there; when Egyptian crocodiles walked and swam in the theatre;

and, later still, when consuls like Junius Bassius decorated their houses with mosaics in which groups of Roman gods and warriors are separated from one another by bands of Egyptian gods—such designs were clearly depicted by a Roman hand.

To return, however, to my outline of the history of Egypt. Augustus relieved the country from the presence and controlling authority of powerful Romans. Levying taxes was a good deal left to the care of natives, especially in Upper Egypt and the Thebaid, the receipt of the taxes being there entrusted to Roman prefects. From A.D. 96 to 260 the force of the spirit of Græco-Roman art generally was broken by the inroad of foreign ideas, especially those derived from Syria and Asia Minor. These countries were at that time the most flourishing provinces within the area of the Roman Empire, according to Müller, and an Asiatic character emanating from thence is very noticeable in the arts of design as well as of literature. A mixture of Greek with indigenous forms, in what Greeks and Romans termed, countries of the barbarians, among which Upper Egypt may be included, appears to belong chiefly to the period when Marcus Aurelius was Emperor. On the death of Claudius, about A.D. 270, the Palmyrenes renewed their attacks upon Egypt, and this second time with success. The whole kingdom (says Sharpe in his "History of Egypt") acknowledged Zenobia (Queen of Palmyra) as their queen. The Greeks, who had been masters of Egypt for six hundred years, ever since the time of Alexander the Great, either in their own name or in that of the Roman Emperors, were then for the first time governed by an Asiatic. Palmyra was ornamented with spoils from Egypt. The red porphyry columns at Palmyra are considered to have been quarried from between Thebes and the Red Sea, and shaped by Egyptian artisans, under the guidance of Greek artists in the service of the Romans. Zenobia's soldiery consisted largely of Arabs, whose presence in Upper Egypt gave new courage to that portion of the population which, known as Blemmyes, belonged to the same sort of Arabic nationality. With such forces at work, although Zenobia had been vanquished by the Romans, the assertion of Arabic or Syrian influence in the neighbourhood of Coptos and in Upper Egypt gained strength. Diocletian then attempted to check this. But although he destroyed many towns, the native Egyptians, the Copts, and Arabs, rose into notice, and Græco-Roman civilisation

lwindled. At the time of Constantine (323-337) the falling state of the Roman Empire rendered the towns and villages in Egypt more or less dependent upon themselves for their defence and government. Orders from Constantinople were little heeded in Upper Egypt. The people chiefly looked to their own ecclesiastical authorities for direction. Christian monks in the Thebaid became the models of discipline, which the Alexandrians imitated. The monasteries there were probably prototypes of those kindred institutions which began to flourish in Europe about this time. Besides attending to their religious offices the monks worked laboriously with their hands, employing themselves amongst other occupations with weaving and the arts of design, especially of patterns for ornaments and MSS. Earnest Christians from Italy travelled to the Thebaid to acquaint themselves more thoroughly with the organisation of the Coptic monasteries. Doubtless they would return home taking with them weavings of all sorts, and in this connection the painting in Christian catacombs of Rome furnish us with interesting evidence of the employment by Christians, in the third to the fifth centuries, of decorated robes similar to those which have been found at Akhmîm. As to these we shall see more later on. Towards 450 A.D. many zealots from Italy flocked to the Theban monasteries to place themselves under the severe discipline of the Coptic monks. And this inroad of Roman influence naturally affected those arts which were practised to the glory of Christianity in Egypt. Sharpe, in his history, gives a wood-cut of a painting of St. Peter, which was done upon part of an ancient carving of Rameses II. with Egyptian gods. The effigy of St. Peter was made to take the place of those of one of these latter, with the result that the Egyptian king appears as presenting an offering to the Christian saint. A considerable quantity of Christian architecture, &c., was erected during the 160 years between the defeat of the Nubians by Diocletian, A.D. 290, and their victories in the reign of Marcian, A.D. 450. A few rare bits of stone, sculptured with apostles under pointed niches, have been recently acquired for the South Kensington Museum. They came from Akhmîm, and are presumably the work of Christian Copts. They appear, however, to belong to a rather later period than the 5th century. They are rude in form and execution, and in this respect correspond with some of the Akhmîm weav-

ings, made about the 8th century. In the early part of the 6th century the Persians began to encroach upon Egypt. Syrians also came in numbers somewhat later to study the religious life in the Christian monasteries. For ten years of the 7th century Egypt was once more governed by the Persians. About 623 the Arabs swept down upon the Persians in Egypt, and twenty years later the country ceased to be a Græco-Roman province. Further than this point I do not propose to go. I imagine that the Akhmîm textiles were produced at periods between the 1st century, B.C., and the 7th or 8th century, A.D., and having said this much, I turn to the different sorts of weaving which these textiles exhibit.

Traditional flax weaving was produced by throwing threads right across and in between two ranks of warp threads, and pressing them down with a batten or flat strip of wood, rather more than the width of the warp rank. The Beni Hassan paintings of the weavers at work furnish a representation of the use of this process 2,000 years B.C. The weaving frames were such as are now called low warp looms, which either are laid upon, or are parallel with, the ground; not vertical or at right angles with it. In most Egyptian flax weaving it is found that warp are finer than the weft threads; these latter being the stouter, were therefore more conveniently passed between the ranks of finer warp threads. This feature is noticeable in the linen portions of the Akhmîm textiles. Beyond this, some linens are of very close texture, and others are open, like square-meshed canvas. The flax in certain of them is so glossy and soft as to lead one at first sight to mistake it for silk. Microscopical examination of the fibres, however, corrects this. Such of the Akhmîm specimens as are of silk form a class altogether distinct in character from the linen and woollen ones. The plain flax weaving was not employed for ornamental purposes; for these, other methods of weaving were adopted. But before referring to these, I may mention certain woven materials which are not ornamental, and differ in fabric from the plain linen weavings.

It was no doubt as much for warmth as well as for variety in texture, that a certain class of linen textiles was produced with a shaggy surface corresponding with that of modern bath towels. Here, for instance, is a specimen of such material; the ancient production and employment of which have been treated at considerable length by Monsieur Heuzey in a recent number of the *Revue Archeologique*.

His researches are of such interest, and have so close a bearing upon the shaggy-surfaced textiles taken from Akhmîm, that I have ventured to make a brief *resumé* of them. They develop suggestions as to a Greek textile called *kaunakes*, which occur in the Onomasticon by Pollux. Of this author, having similar inclinations as Pliny, but writing a hundred years later, it is interesting to note that he was a native of the old Greek town of Naukratis in Egypt, and that his references therefore to textiles seem to throw light upon those from Akhmîm.

FIG. 1.



Tufted or shaggy-faced woven linen (from Akhmîm) similar to the *kaunakes*, or *phlocata*, of the Greeks, and *gausapum* of the Romans.

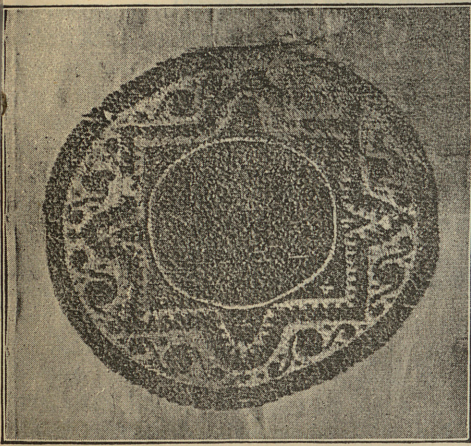
Monsieur Heuzey produces good reasons for believing that shaggy-faced textiles similar to the one before us were manufactured 2,000 years B.C. Many of the little Chaldæan cylinders are engraved with figures, some of whom wear crinkled or pleated-looking garments. The same character is seen in sculptures from Nimroud. The conventional renderings of hairy surfaces, such as manes of lions, have led Monsieur Heuzey to the conclusion that these apparent crinkles and pleats are conventional renderings of shaggy surfaced stuffs—representations in fact of series of loops or fringes. Now Pollux, in writing of the *kaunakes* material, refers to

dialogues upon this textile, which pass between Philocleon and Bdelycleon, two characters in the "Wasps" of Aristophanes. Bdelycleon is pressing his friend to wear a shaggy mantle. "Some," he says, "Call it a Persian cloak, others a *kaunakes*." Philocleon fancies it to be a Thymetan wrapper—the ancient village of Thymetes in Greece being noted at that time for the manufacture of shaggy or rough material known there as *sisyra*. "No wonder," retorts Bdelycleon, who displays a great deal of knowledge about these fabrics, "for you cannot have been to Sardis, or you would have known better." Mantles, like the one he is offering are, he explains, made at Ecbatana—hence the reason for calling them Persian. "What," says his companion, referring to the rows of loops on the mantle, "is woollen tripe made at Ecbatana?" Upon which Bdelycleon, taking him literally, rejoins, "By no means, my good sir; this is woven by the barbarians at a great expense; of a surety this very mantle must have required a talent of wool in its making." "Pray, then," asks Philocleon, "ought we not more properly to call it wool consumer than *kaunakes*?" From which Monsieur Heuzey concludes that the make of *kaunakes* was similar to that of the wool consumer made by the barbarians at Ecbatana. A figure of Perso-Assyrian sculpture at Parsagadæ, dating before Alexander's conquests in the district, wears a shaggy-faced robe, and this whilst possibly representing the "wool consuming" fabric is distinctly of the same character as the shaggy weaving from Akhmîm. The *phlocata* of the Greeks, in use in some parts of Greece at the present day, also would correspond with the "wool consumer," as well as in a degree with the *kaunakes*. Hesychius writes of one class of *kaunakes* as being *etero-malla*, or shaggy on one side only. Pliny, moreover, writes, "I, myself, recollect the *amphi-malla* (a material shaggy on both sides), and the long shaggy apron being introduced, but at the present day the *lati-clave* tunic is beginning to be manufactured in imitation of the *gausapa*." The *gausapum* was usually a woollen textile, something like felt or flannel. But it was also made of linen, and then with a shaggy surface. Now, here is a fragment of a *lati-clave* tunic from Akhmîm, made of linen. It is probably of the material which the Greeks would have called *kaunakes*, and the Romans *amphi-malla*, and perhaps *gausapa*. Monsieur Heuzey showed a specimen of the

haggy linen material from Akhmîm to the director of the Gobelins Tapestry Works, and he at once identified its manufacture as one in which modern tapestry weavers would employ what is traditionally known to them as the Saracenic knot. The peculiarity of covering the face of a textile with series of loops enters into the manufacture of velvet. In that case the loops are very small and ranged closely together; they are cut through, and so form the pile. A further modification of what seems to be the classic *kaunakes* is to be noted in other specimens from Akhmîm, in which the ranks of loops are wide apart, with intervening linen between them, as in this specimen.

I now pass to another sort of textile from Akhmîm. The work on this linen appears to have been done with a needle. The loops here are made of worsteds; they are much

FIG. 2.



Looped Worsted Embroidery on Stout Linen; from Akhmîm.

shorter, and compacted more closely together, than the linen loops of the *kaunakes*. The texture of this roundel, inclosing a star device worked with close short loops of worsted, has some resemblance to that of a Turkey carpet. The method of making a carpet, however, is quite different from this embroidery.

It appears from fragments found together at Akhmîm, that small lengths of reed were used to regulate the size of the loops. Here are photographs of the fragments in question. The linen to be embroidered with short loops of worsted was probably first stretched out in a frame. A reed was then fastened by a stitch or two to the face of the linen at the

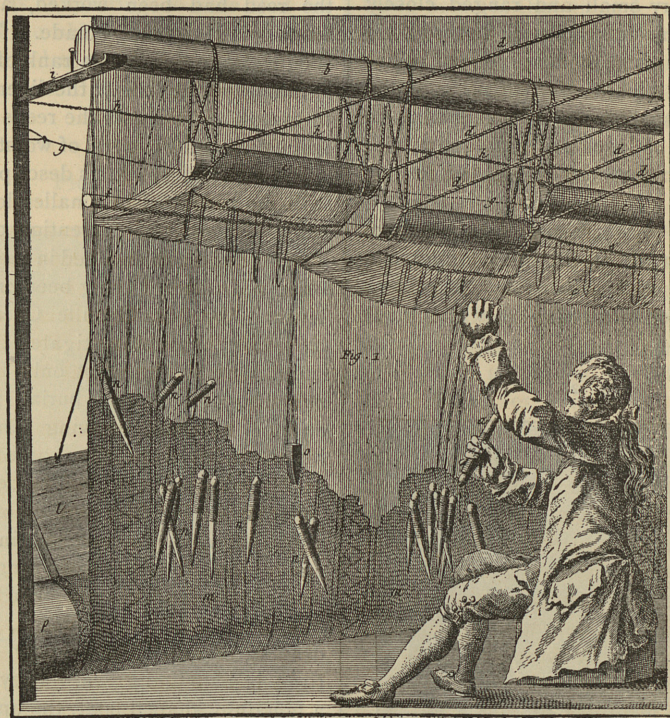
place where the loops were to be worked. The needle, charged with worsted or flax, was then pushed through from the under side of the linen close to one side of the reed; the worsted was then brought over the reed, and the needle pushed down through the face of the linen close to the spot where it had entered the linen from underneath. Thus a loop around the reed had been worked, and successive loops were similarly made. The reed was then withdrawn and so a rank of loops was left standing on the face of the linen. The small fragment below shows the reeds or little sticks still enveloped by loops of worsted.

But embroidery of this description was made with finer worsted in smaller loops, and probably without the intervention of small reeds. A corner of a cloth worked in this way is at the British Museum, having been presented to the Museum by Mr. Greville Chester, who has visited Egypt and investigated the textiles and embroideries taken not only from Akhmîm, but also from other burial places further north, at which weaving and embroidery were produced of the same character as at Akhmîm. I am glad to be able to show you the British Museum embroidery in this photograph. The colours in the original are bright. The two little winged figures are wrought in flesh colour. The one on the left has blue and green wings, and wears a drapery of red. The drapery of that on the right is blue and green. They are rowing in a fancifully shaped boat, the upturned ends of which are according to Egyptian tradition. Below the prow on the right, part of a fish is visible; on the other side is a rosebud; elsewhere buds are to be seen. The border consists of green and coloured leafage, with a man's face in a roundel at the corner. The style of ornament and treatment is more Roman than Egyptian. We might imagine that some Græco-Roman designer, possibly of the time of Cleopatra, had drawn and coloured the pattern, and that it had been worked by an Egyptian embroiderer. The character of the design is such, however, as might also belong to a century or so later. Yates, in his *Textrinum Antiquorum*, quotes a passage from the life of the Emperor Carinus (3rd century, A.D.), by Flavius Vopiscus, "Why should I mention the linen cloths brought from Egypt . . . prized on account of their laboured embroidery." And it can be well understood that such an embroidered linen as the one before us would be prized by a Roman of that time.

The third and most numerous represented section of Akhmîm textiles is that in which, to quote Herodotus, patterns are inwrought into the linen. The process employed for such inwoven ornament is the same as that which

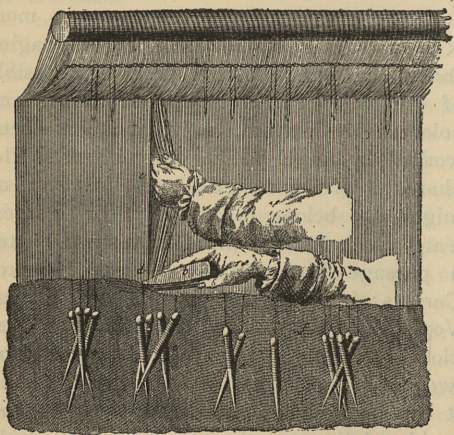
was used by the great Flemish weavers, on a far larger scale, for making their splendid wall tapestries, and is now commonly known as the tapestry-weaving or Gobelin process. It is quite distinct from weaving in a loom with a

FIG. 3.



Gobelins Tapestry Weaver, 18th century.

FIG. 4.



Use of Comb in Gobelin Tapestry Weaving, 18th century.

shuttle. It is minutely described by Ovid in his story of Minerva and Arachne. (*Metamorphoses* VI., 55, 69.)

Arachne was the daughter of Idmon, a Lydian dyer, and was noted for her skill in all sorts of wool work—in spinning, weaving, and embroidering; but she denied being under any obligation to Minerva for her skill in these arts. So assured was she of her supreme ability that she confidently exclaimed, "Let the goddess contend with me. There is nothing which, if conquered, I should refuse to endure." Accordingly Minerva, disguised as an old woman, comes to her and urges her to hearken to advice: "Let the greatest fame for working wool be sought by thee amongst mortals; but yield to the goddess, rash woman, and ask pardon for thy speeches." Spurning this advice, Arachne demands why

the goddess does not come herself? Why does she decline a contest? Then casting aside the figure of an old woman Minerva reveals herself, "Lo! she is come." Arachne, unabashed, repeats her challenge, which the daughter of Jupiter accepts. There is no delay; they both take their stand at different places, and stretch out two webs with fine warp. The web is tied around the beam, the batten separates the web, the wool is inserted with pointed bobbins hurried along by the fingers, and being drawn within the warp is struck down with the comb, through the teeth of which the warp threads pass. The separate designs grow rapidly under the skilful fingers. That wrought by Minerva represented her genius in producing a shoot of pale olive with berries, by touching the earth with her spear, and Neptune's magic art in causing a horse to spring from a rock which he strikes with his trident. At the four corners of this central group of figures she introduced combats of gods with mortals, and between these placed bands of olive branches. Arachne, on the other hand, depicted a series of episodes in the amours of the gods, or as Minerva stigmatised them, "the criminal acts of the gods of heaven," and surrounded them with a border of ivy leaf garlands interlaced with flowers. The competition is apparently terminated in an abrupt manner by Minerva, who, incensed at the subjects depicted by Arachne, rends the weaving in pieces, and strikes the hapless mortal on the head three or four times with her bobbins. This degradation is too much for Arachne, who forthwith proceeds to hang herself. She is suspended in mid-air from a tree, when Minerva changes her into a spider, "and as such Arachne works at her web as formerly." Poetical imagination takes no account of the time which ordinary mortals would have consumed before they could have made much appreciable progress with such elaborately patterned tapestries. The realism of the scene is enforced, however, by Ovid's precision in describing the weaving operations. It is certain that he must have been thoroughly conversant with them, either through personal observation of what was surely an everyday occupation at his time, or from information derived from some practised worker. We may test Ovid's accuracy by means of diagrams taken from a last century dictionary of manufactures. These diagrams show us the process of tapestry weaving at the Gobelins factory, which is the same to the present day.

In Fig. 3 (p. 8) we have a frame with its web of warp threads, and a man passing a bobbin thread in between and around them. Fig. 4 (p. 8) is another diagram of the worker using a comb to compress the weavings of the bobbin threads. These diagrams refer to work on a somewhat larger scale than that apparently adopted by Minerva and Arachne.

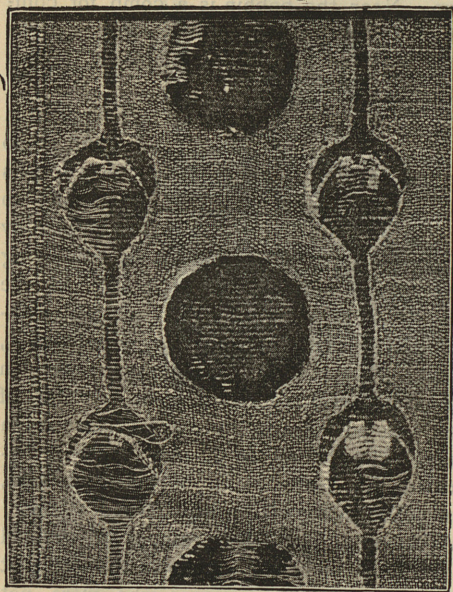
The Egyptians of Akhmîm, who made use of a precisely similar process, did so for a great deal of work wrought on a far smaller scale in comparatively small frames. Here we have a diagram of an old Egyptian frame, and workmen arranging it for weaving. Above it is a hieroglyphic, which includes amongst other signs a bobbin pointed at both ends, and indented and rounded at the centre to carry thread, and pass easily between and around the warp. Near the bobbin is a comb for compressing the weaving. The bobbin and the comb are the principal implements in this process.

As I have said, ornamental weavings from Akhmîm, by means of this bobbin and comb method, were inwrought chiefly with worsteds into linens. Where the ornament was to appear the linen weaver left spaces crossed by warp threads only—a feature in employing the process which was noticeable in the Greek weavings from Kouban already mentioned. I now display a diagram (Fig. 5, p. 10) of linen from Akhmîm inwoven in the same way with ornament. Parts of the worsted ornaments have been eaten away. The old law or custom of Egypt proscribed the use of wool in burial dresses, "in consequence of its engendering worms" (Wilkinson). Thus the presence of worsted in these Akhmîm textiles shows at least that they were made for persons who were not bound by traditional Egyptian custom, such, for instance, as Greeks, Romans, and Christian Copts. The partial disappearance of the wool testifies to the wisdom of the Egyptians in taking precautions against the engendering of worms in the tombs. At the same time, this disappearance of the wool has enabled us to clearly trace the flax warp threads across the open spaces of the linen. Upon these flax warps the wool was originally twisted. On the back of most of the worsted weavings we have the weft flax threads lying loose.

Other specimens of Akhmîm tapestry weavings may perhaps have been made separately and then sewn on to linen, as in this specimen.

Such *appliqué* work would be well suited to embellishing a somewhat worn linen robe. The Romans certainly had such a fashion, as Pliny remarks, "that a garment when it has been worn for some time is often embroidered with wool from Egypt." We have noted the important part which a comb, for compressing the weaving, plays in the process. This, as Ovid has proved, was thoroughly understood by Romans in the 1st century B.C., and Martial refers also to it in one of his epigrams, where he writes of a cloth, "The land of Memphis makes you this present. The Babylonian needle is now surpassed by the comb of the Nile."

FIG 5.



Piece of linen with coloured worsted tapestry weavings.

Before leaving the subject of tapestry-weaving or comb work for the ornamentation of costumes and linen cloths, coverlets, &c., I should like incidentally to direct your notice to the remarkably interesting specimens of identical manufacture which, like those of Akhmîm, have been taken from graves or tombs sunk in the sandy soil of a more southerly latitude than Upper Egypt, but on the opposite side of the world—I allude to Peru. The Necropolis of Ancon—near the Pacific Coast and to the north of Lima—has been explored of recent years. It is the first of such Peruvian burial-places which has been

investigated. Ancon was the settlement of a comparatively poor population.

The system of burial in vogue there during the Inca empire, and the soil and climate, have contributed to the preservation of a great number of ornamental textiles, woven in identically the same manner as the Akhmîm specimens. The patterns, however, are ruder, although some of the details even are similar.

Here is a specimen in which a Greek key pattern occurs. This pattern, however, is virtually universal, and is as much the property of the Greeks as it is of the Chinese. Here is the figure possibly of an Inca chieftain carrying the head of one of his victims. And here is a characteristic Peruvian ornament in which we can detect the Greek wave pattern, which, like the key pattern, belongs entirely to no one nation.

The circumstances under which the early Peruvians wove such textiles as those just seen, must extend over periods to tell the story of which would undoubtedly require a separate lecture; I do not, therefore, propose to touch upon them. But I may perhaps say that the various articles taken from the Peruvian graves at Ancon have been photographed, and a large work in sixteen folios containing coloured fac-similes of them, has been published by Messrs. Asher and Co., with the aid of the General Administration of the Royal Museums of Berlin.

Besides the textiles we have considered this evening, fragments of elaborately patterned silks have been brought from Akhmîm and elsewhere in Egypt. For the most part these silks are of a Syrian and Byzantine character. Some are reproductions of patterns wrought in the worsted and flax tapestry weavings. It is possible that such silks date from about the 6th or 7th century, when the use of silk in Europe was becoming general. Within present limits I find that I shall not be able to treat more fully of these silks.

Briefly put, the points of this evening's lecture are as follows:—A variety of textiles is discovered at Akhmîm, in Upper Egypt. Between the 7th century B.C. to the 7th century A.D., this place, like others in Egypt, has been subjected to foreign influences, such as Persian, Greek, Roman, Syrian, and Arabian or Saracenic. These influences have left their marks upon the productions of local artisans

skilled in processes of textile manufacture and embroidery, the art of which they inherited from their forefathers, the ancient Egyptians of Bible history. Other and later nations were also versed in many of these processes. We have seen shaggy-surfaced linens from Akhmîm which correspond with similar stuffs made by Assyrians, Persians, Greeks, and Romans. We have noted Akhmîm worsted embroideries which, according to Roman writers of the Augustan period, were apparently well known to the Romans of that age. We have found that a tapestry-weaving process, in which a hand-comb is an important implement, was used by old Egyptians, Greeks, and Akhmîm weavers, as well as by Peruvians; and from this fact, coupled with others of identical character in respect of the Indians, Chinese, and natives of Islands like Borneo, the deduction is fairly made that this tapestry-weaving process is amongst the earliest of ornamental textile processes. It is early in date when traced in connection with historic peoples, and early in usage with people of primitive culture. It was extensively used by weavers at Akhmîm, at the beginning of the Christian era, for the decoration of articles of costume and of hangings. The Romans

employed it for textile pictures, as Ovid has told us. We know that for making similar things it has been for more than 300 years, and still is, in use at the Gobelins manufactory. We know, too, that we are indebted to it for the examples handed down to us of those gorgeous wall hangings which bedecked the halls and castles of European countries between the 14th and 17th centuries.

From the earliest to the latest times known to us there have been ebbs and flows in the tide of human skill in processes for making textiles. Whilst modifications have been introduced into them at different times, the principles of them have remained the same throughout.

My first lecture having dealt chiefly with the processes, my second will relate to ornamental designs as interpreted at Akhmîm by those processes. Next Monday, therefore, I propose to bring before you a number of examples made at Akhmîm. They exhibit a great variety of patterns and dress ornaments, and by comparing them with similar ornaments in things of which the dates of production are authenticated, I hope to establish approximate dates of the manufacture of the Akhmîm specimens.

---

## LECTURE II.—DELIVERED JANUARY 28, 1889.

---

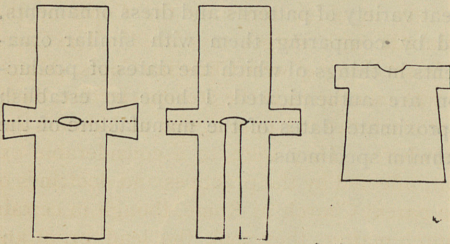
I attempted last Monday evening to convey to you an impression of circumstances which might account for the appearance at Akhmîm of a number of woven and embroidered textiles of Græco-Roman, Persian, and Christian character. This evening I have to bring before you representations of these textiles. The greater number of them are merely fragments of costume and cloths; there are, however, a few fairly complete specimens of garments, almost all of which are of the tunic class. Broadly speaking, the tunic has been worn by all historic nations. The dalmatic of the Carolingian deacon, the tabard of the mediæval herald, the blouse of the French labourer, and the smock frock of the English

and Scandinavian countryman, are all survivals of the ancient tunic. In simpler forms we find that it was worn by Egyptians, Assyrians, Greeks, and Romans; and in considering the relationship which the Akhmîm tunics bear to these, I have extracted a few diagrams (Fig. 1, p. 12) from Köhler's admirable work on costume, which I now bring before you. The first is a plan of the ancient Egyptian tunic or *kalasiris*, of a period long before the Græco-Roman domination. It consists of a long rectangular piece of material, with a short slit running across its width at the centre of the piece; through this the wearer passed his head. The sleeves are of angular shape, narrower where they would surround the upper part of the arm, and wider

where they came round the elbows. Such a tunic was tied in at the waist with a girdle. When a girdle was not to be worn, the garment was shaped so as to be narrower across the breast than at the hem of the skirt. This shaping is noticeable in the Roman short tunic—the third of the diagrams. In that tunic it will be seen that the sleeves are cut square, differing therefore in this respect from the angular sleeves of the old Egyptian *kalasiris*. The second diagram represents the plan of the Hebrew and Syrian tunic robe. It is rectangular in shape, with square sleeves, but the front of the dress opens down to the skirt. Its shape has much in common with that of the Egyptian *kalasiris*. The wearer of such a Hebrew robe put it on by throwing it open and slipping his arms into the sleeves, whereas the

like that of the Assyrian and Hebrew tunics than that of the Roman tunic. And this is of some importance with regard to the dating of the Akhmîm garments. Egyptian, Assyrian, and Hebrew tunics were worn in Egypt before Greek or Roman tunics, so that the development of the Akhmîm tunic might be quite independent of influences from Greek or Roman dresses. I lay some stress upon this, because it has been said that the Akhmîm tunics owe their origin chiefly to Roman influence. The ornamentation of them, to which we shall refer directly, certainly exhibits the effect of Roman influence; but it also exhibits, in a similar way, other influences. An instance of how garments of closely similar shape have been made by

FIG. 6.

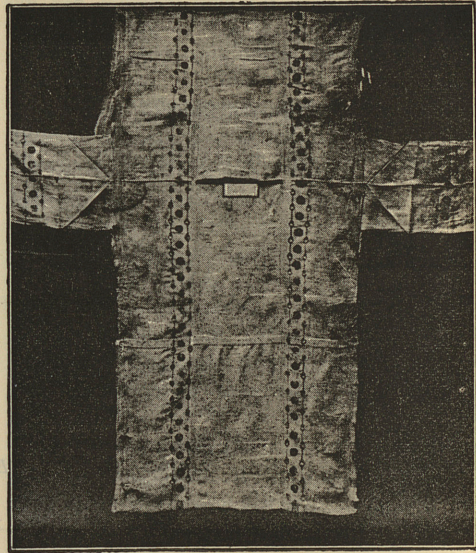


Tunic-shaped Garments.

wearer of a tunic, which did not open in front, had to pass his head through the hole made for that purpose in the centre of the dress, and then to work his arms into the sleeves. Figures of other varieties of tunic costume might also be produced, but they are virtually included in the three diagrams before us. The Assyrians, 1,000 years B.C., wore rather short square-sleeve tunics, of which many indications occur in such carved stone slabs as are in the British Museum. They are apparently much like the Akhmîm tunics in shape. This is not surprising considering the intercourse which existed between Assyria and Egypt.

Here now is a tunic from Akhmîm (Fig. 7). Its sides and sleeves are unstitched. Its sleeves are square like the sleeves of the Assyrian, Hebrew, and Roman tunics. The width being the same throughout, the garment corresponds in this respect with the old Egyptian, Assyrian, and Hebrew tunics, but differs from the Roman tunic; from which it seems that the shape of the Akhmîm dress is more nearly

FIG. 7.

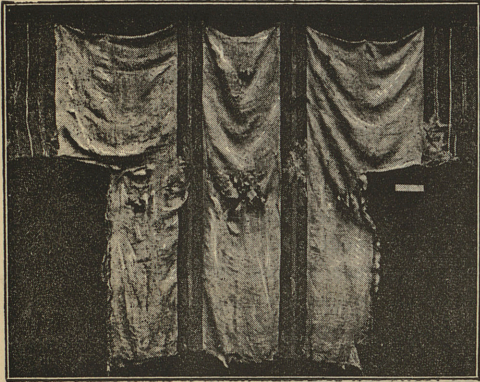


Linen Tunic from Akhmîm.

peoples not brought into directly traceable contact with one another is supplied by Peru. Here is a short tunic jacket with square sleeves. This came from graves at Ancon, which I mentioned at the close of the previous lecture. It was worn by some Peruvian during the Inca Empire. Is it, indeed, an evidence of Asiatic influences which migrating tribes of prehistoric periods brought with them when they passed from the Eastern into the Western Hemisphere? And is it, therefore, a descendant of the parent stock to which the Akhmîm tunics are traceable? On the other hand, is it merely an evidence of one of those coincidences occa-

sioned by kindred human wants in nearly corresponding circumstances of climate? Below the Peruvian jacket is a square, sleeveless garment. The hole for the wearer's head is cut in a vertical direction. From Akhmîm we have similar dresses. Here is one of them. The hole for the head is cut horizontally, or

FIG. 8.



Full-sleeved Tunic from Akhmîm.

across the width. This, again, is a survival of an ancient Egyptian jerkin, and scarcely an adaptation from a Roman dress. The Hebrews and Syrians also wore a dress of the same sort, but rather longer. They used it as an over-covering, and it was open at the sides.

FIG. 9.



Figure of a Christian wearing a full-sleeved Tunic—from the Catacombs of St. Callixtus, Rome.

The question of the varieties of such dresses with and without sleeves, which were worn by the different nationalities, Hebrews, Syrians, Greeks, and Romans, who inhabited Egypt at the periods with which we are concerned is, as may be well imagined, a very wide one.

Some of the ampler and fuller sleeved tunics

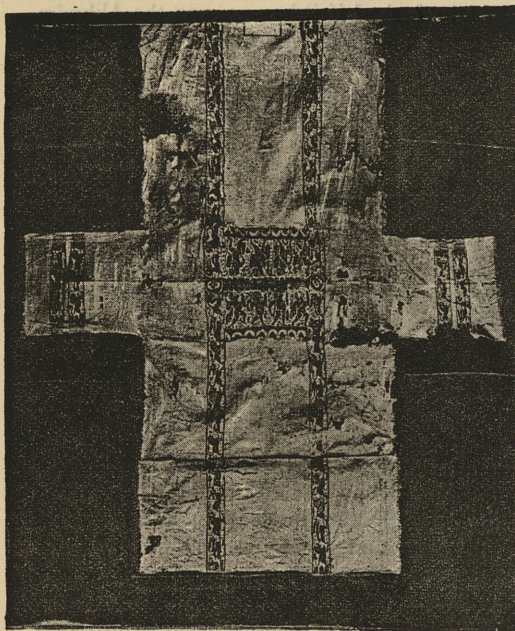
from Akhmîm are remarkably like those worn by Romans in the 3rd and 4th centuries. But whether they were introduced as Martial might have said from the land of Memphis into Rome, or, as seems to be less reasonable, from Rome into Egypt, I will not attempt to decide. The full-sleeve long tunic from Akhmîm now before us (Fig. 8) finds its fellow in a wall painting of the 3rd or 4th century, from the catacombs of St. Callixtus, at Rome (Fig. 9). Here is a photograph of that painting. It displays a woman with uplifted hands in the act of prayer. She is an early Christian, and this suggests the thought whether her robe has any ecclesiastical significance. Is it an early type of dalmatic as sometimes worn by the laity? And if it be one, was the Akhmîm specimen also a dalmatic used by a Christian Copt.

Mr. Butler, in his book on "Ancient Coptic Churches," writes that he has been "unable to find any evidence, pictorial or written, for the use in olden times by the Copts of the dalmatic with stripes or *clavi*." The Copts he is speaking of were Christian Copts. Many, as was mentioned in the previous lecture, dwelt in monasteries of Upper Egypt, at Akhmîm and elsewhere. They were, to a considerable extent, affected by the practices and doctrines of the parent Church at Rome, though in certain church matters they took the lead, or, at any rate asserted an independence. The fathers of the Roman Church ruled that simple white garments alone should be used by the faithful. But through the inclinations of individual Christians, and no doubt, too, through the fashion of Pagan Romans amongst whom they lived, the rule was not strictly kept, for St. Jerome in the 4th century exhorts Christians not to make their linen tunics into precious robes; and elsewhere he deprecates the extravagance of the Roman Pagans in using costly decorated costumes. However, it was of this period that the importation from Alexandria of garments enriched with "figures of saints" and so forth, is specially mentioned by writers of the time. And probably to such dresses as had decorations of religious significance the later ritual of the Church is distantly indebted for its gorgeous copes, chasubles, and dalmatics.

The ornamented garments from Alexandria lead us to the consideration of those from Akhmîm; and for this purpose I have selected three differently decorated tunics, which, I fancy, mark changes of fashion that occurred during three or four hundred years at least.

The first (Fig. 5) is a tunic with bands, or *clavi*—of ornament consisting of animals—passing from the shoulders down the length of the dress, back and front. Close to the neck between the bands is a wider band figured of Ethiopian or Arabian soldiery. Each has a shield in his left hand. The two end ones seem to be in the act of throwing, the second holds a leafy stick, the third a sword or stick. All have uplifted heads. A corresponding short band of figures is on the back of the tunic. This is surely a secular and not a religious dress. At the centre of one shoulder-

FIG. 5.



Akhmim Tunic with Bands or *Clavi*.

band is a four-petalled blossom, and the corresponding device in the other shoulder-band is a cross; but it does not therefore follow that this cross has a Christian significance. Crosses of various shapes were used as ornamental devices long before Christianity was preached. Here is half of another tunic. Besides shoulder-bands, running down the entire length of the garment, breast, and cuff ornaments, we see on the shoulder a square and another smaller one near the bottom of the skirt on the left hand. Similar squares were inwrought at the other corresponding portions of this tunic. Such squares in Roman and Byzantine tunics were called *tabulae adjunctæ*. But I have not

been able to find evidence that the tunic makers of Akhmim may not have introduced such *tabulae* in their garments as early as the 1st century. They mark a fresh fashion in the decoration of tunics, and so far as the Romans and Byzantines are concerned, they were in use as early as the 4th century and as late as the 10th century. Paintings at Pompeii supply us with instances of the tunics with shoulder-bands only, and without *tabulae adjunctæ*. As these paintings are of the 1st century it seems pretty obvious that the *tabulae adjunctæ* were not adopted by the Romans at that time. Towards the centre of the breast ornament in this specimen is a Coptic cross, similar to such as in other ornamental works of art date from the 4th century. Whilst the arcades, the pose of the grotesquely drawn figures forming the breast ornament, and the acanthus scrolls on the sleeves are Roman in general character, the group in the lower square of the skirt is adapted from an earlier type of design. Later on I will show a larger diagram of this group, and leave my remarks upon it until then. This tunic, however, seems to be a secular rather than an ecclesiastical one.

We now pass to a third well-marked type of tunic decoration. Oddly enough, almost all the specimens which belong to this type are the worst preserved and most decayed. In the present one we find that the shoulder bands or *clavi* are short. They reach barely more than halfway down the dress. They are rounded at the ends, and terminate in pendant ovals. This is characteristic of Syrian decoration to such robes. There is no specially designed breast border between the *clavi*. Instead of squares on the shoulders and at the skirts there are circular panels. The Romans also in the 3rd and 4th centuries used circular panels, calling them *caliculæ*. Many of the subjects woven in the circular panels and in bands, of the same shape as that of these on this tunic, are distinctly of Christian saints; especially of the Coptic Church, like St. George, St. Paul of Thebes, St. Christopher, and St. Demetrius who are figured in various fragments. It is likely that a specimen of this class dates from between the 6th and 8th centuries. Such subjects are therefore quite distinct from the pagan and Roman types of decoration.

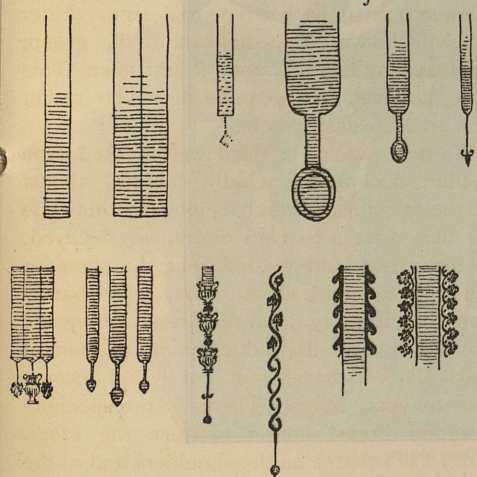
Bands, squares, circular panels, together with other devices having a variety of shapes, were also used upon cloths or wrappers. With the view of giving some notion of their variety, I have made some rough sketches of a

selection from them (Fig. 10). Amongst them I have included those with which we are already acquainted.

The first is the square-ended band, next to it a double square-ended band, and then a short square-ended band with a little diamond-shaped pendant. The next three are round-ended bands with oval pendants, and a very narrow little band of this type, but with a pendant trefoil device. Below are varieties of triple bands, the first set close together, having vases as pendants; in the second set the bands are separated. This sort of treatment is common with the robes of Arabs in Palestine. Next to these we have bands composed of ornament such as a series of classic vases, and scrolls with and without ivy leaves, all classical in style. The last are

FIG. 10.

BANDS or CLAVI on various TUNICS from AKHMÎM



examples of bands with ornamental edgings to them. I ask you to notice the last but one of these two bands. We find in a painting of the 3rd century, from the catacombs of Rome, very similar bands on the robe of a Christian saint in the act of prayer.

Another catacomb painting, partially destroyed, gives us the figure of a man praying—an *orante*—and clad in a long-sleeved tunic—the *tunica manicata*. Upon this are two short *clavi* with angular ends, terminating in balls. These short *clavi* remind us of those on Christian Coptic tunics. Besides his tunic the figure is wearing an over-cloak.

Although the catacomb wall paintings of the 3rd and 4th centuries supply the greater

number of instances of fashion in wearing pairs of bands or *clavi* upon tunics, it may be useful to remind you that the Roman tunic was, from the times of the kings, 7th century, B.C., decorated with a single broad band or *clavus*, a *latus clavus*, running down the centre of the dress. A good deal later a fashion for narrower bands arose; the narrow bands were called *angusti clavi*, and apparently were always worn in pairs as we have seen. Was this style of double *clavi*, however, adopted from very early Oriental costume?

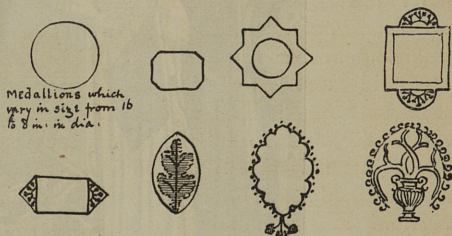
Leaving the bands, we come now to a diagram of shapes of panels on tunics, and on cloths or wrappers (Fig. 7). The squares for tunics vary in size on the Akhmîm specimens from 11 in. to 1½ in. square; the circular panels, roundels, *caliculae*, or *orbiculi*, vary from 5 in. to 3 in. in diameter. The simple circular

FIG. 7.

PANELS ON TUNICS

Squares or  
caliculae which  
vary in size from  
11 in. to 1½ in. sq.Roundels or  
orbiculi which  
vary in diam. from  
5 to 3 in.

PANELS ON CLOTHS.



Panels from Akhmîm tunics and cloths.

panels on cloths were often much larger; some were as much as 16 in. in diameter. Then there are octagonal shapes, and star figures with a central circle. This particular form of star abounds in Saracenic tiles and wood-work, formerly so common in Cairo. In its application to textile stuffs, it seems to be some centuries earlier than when used by Saracens in Cairo for tiles and wood-work. The remaining shapes of panels on the diagram are merely suggestive of the great variety of such things amongst the Akhmîm weavings. We shall have occasion to refer to some of them singly; but before doing so, I wish to bring before you a few further instances of the use by Romans of decorated robes in which occur certain details similar to those from Akhmîm.

The youth praying is from the catacomb of St. Soteris at Rome, and was painted in the

4th century. Upon the skirt of his tunic are two roundels or *caliculæ*.

Here is a piece of beaten metal work of the 4th century; it is part of a silver disc some 18 in. in diameter. The subject represented in the whole disc is the Emperor Theodosius appointing a magistrate. On the right of the emperor is his son Arcadius; on his left his son Honorius. The portion of the disc which I have had photographed, on account of the details of costume shown in it, only gives us Arcadius seated in state. He wears a long-sleeved tunic, and on his left shoulder can be seen the indications of an ornamental circular panel, or *orbiculus*. On his breast is a short pointed band; on the lower part of his toga, or cloak, is a large rectangular

panel, filled in with a pattern of overlapping circles. To his right is seen an extended hand and arm, which belongs to the Emperor Theodosius. The hand is delivering a scroll or commission of appointment to the newly made magistrate, whose ample cloak is decorated with square panels. At the opening of the cloak we see the magistrate's girdled tunic, and on the skirt of this is a round panel or *calicula*. This interesting piece of late Roman silversmith's work was found some forty years ago in Spain, in Estremadura.

About 150 years later are the mosaics at Ravenna, designed to the order of the Emperor Justinian by a silversmith—one Julianus Argentarius. A portion of the mosaic displaying the Empress Theodora and her Court,

FIG. 13.



The Empress Theodora and her Court; from the Mosaic at Ravenna.

is now shown (Fig. 13). There is much in this which it would be interesting to compare with Akhmîm patterns, but the features to which I must now restrict my remarks are the panels—*tabulæ adjunctæ*—on the robes. The lady on the left hand of the empress wears a cloak, on the corner of which is a star-shape panel with a circular device within it, which is similar to the star-shape panel previously alluded to. The lady next to her has two *caliculæ*—roundels—upon the skirt of her dress; and a third lady wears a cloak with a square panel on it, and two more ornamented square panels appear upon the skirt of her dress. In these we have authentic examples of Roman costume of the middle of the 6th century, A.D. It seems most probable that the panels, as

indeed very much of the other patterns, were wrought by the tapestry-weaving process such as we find was used for the majority of the Akhmîm ornaments.

Hitherto I have kept to the bands and panels of dresses. Those for cloths or wrappers were on a somewhat larger scale. A very considerable number of them are made with purple or brownish wools, with outline patterns wrought in yellow flax threads. Possibly the purple dye used at Akhmîm was similar to the historic dye of Tyre. But long after Tyre had been celebrated for its dye, Greek and other towns became notable for corresponding dyes. Hermione, a town in Argolis, was such a one. Mention was made in the course of the previous lecture of the Egyptian artists, weavers,

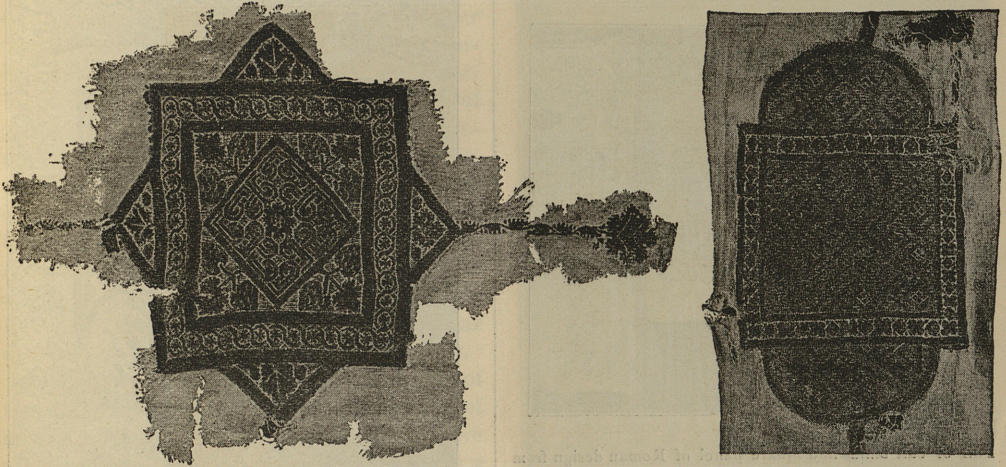
and handicraftsmen taken captive and sent by Cambyses, about 525 B.C., into Persia. Now Plutarch writes that Alexander, about 190 years after Cambyses, having made himself master of Susa or Shusan, found, in the king's palace, "much treasure, as well as purple of Hermione, worth 5,000 talents, which, though it had been laid up 190 years, retained its freshness." Was this a store of purple weaving produced by the captive Egyptian weavers? The coincidence of date lends itself to support such a suggestion. But leaving this, it is quite certain that much of the purple dye used by the Akhmîm weavers has retained its freshness for over 1200 years. This is attested by the actual specimens shown this evening. The endurance of such purple was famed in Plutarch's time, as he goes on to say that

"the reason they assign for this is that the purple wool was combed with honey, and the white with white oil. We are assured, moreover, that specimens of the same kind and age are still to be seen in all their pristine lustre."

These ornamental panels (Fig. 14) are of purple wool, the white patterning on them being of flax. Both the shapes are of Roman and Oriental character. Here, again, are bands of similar work. The specimen is the half of a cloth or covering such as Greeks, Romans, and others have used to throw over couches or employed as shrouds. The patterns are varied, but are of a character which may have been in vogue for many hundreds of years.

I am now going to deal with certain of the Akhmîm specimens in detail. The extra-

FIG. 14.



Panels of purple wool and white linen from Akhmîm.

ordinary wealth of materials which I have at my disposal, however, quite precludes me from attempting a systematic classification of the different ornamental devices to be seen in them. Here (Fig. 15, p. 18), for instance, are three specimens of quite an early Roman type, the centre piece particularly. If you refer to wall paintings of the 1st century at Pompeii, you find, amidst the decorations of interiors of houses, squares and medallions containing figures of gods and goddesses. Some—as, for instance, those of Orpheus and Paris—wear circular *nimbi* corresponding with that around the head of this Hermes. He is here represented with a purse in one hand and a *caduceus* in the other. His name in Greek characters appears in the upper part of the square panel. This panel was probably a *tabula adjuncta* of a tunic.

The small bands on each side of the Hermes are from the cuffs of a tunic. The weaving of the ornament in them is almost daintier than that of the Hermes. The bands on the right contain a series of charmingly-drawn little animals and dancing boys; those on the left are treated like pilasters, with a succession of balanced leafy forms springing from a basket—a stem terminated with a pomegranate, a snake twisting around it, and at the upper end a duck. Such emblems and devices are more Roman than Oriental, and for this reason I should fancy that they were designed for the Akhmîm weavers previously to the 3rd century, at which time the Syrian and Oriental influence became more predominant generally.

I will now show you a copy of a Roman mosaic found at Constantine, in Algeria,

belonging probably to the 1st or 2nd century. Neptune and Amphitrite in a chariot drawn by seahorses, with two winged cupids holding a fluttering scarf above them are here represented. We find a somewhat similar disposition of figures in the *calicula*, or roundel from an Akhmîm tunic. But the weaver's rendering is not so clearly defined as the mosaics. In this we have a god and a goddess in a car drawn by centaurs. On each side of the god and goddess is a dancing figure, one holding a cup, the other apparently beating a drum with her hand.

Here is another specimen of similar style. It is a square panel from a tunic, and the planning of the ornament is quite in accord with that adopted in Roman mosaics. The central square is set with a circle surrounding

FIG. 15.



Pair of cuff bands and square panel of Roman design from Akhmîm Tunics.

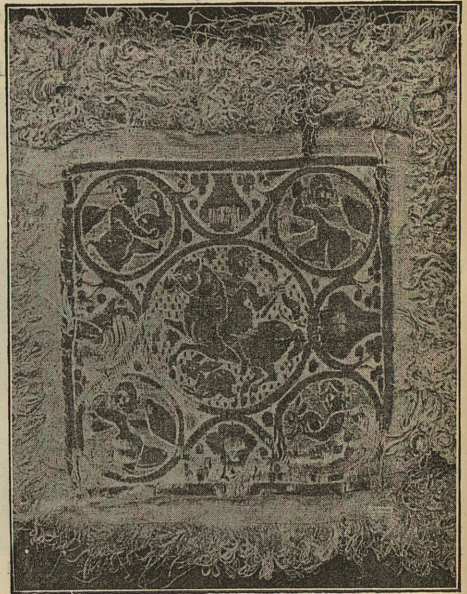
a horseman. The border contains four women, holding scarfs which float over their heads, between them are chimerical beasts with fish tails.

The horseman or hunter seems to have been a favourite subject with the Akhmîm weavers. It was possibly in use with them as early as the 2nd century A.D., and survived to a still later period. It also frequently appears as the central group of a pattern set out upon a Roman plan. Here is a specimen of such (Fig. 16). In the central medallion is an archer, beneath the legs of his prancing horse a long-eared dog. At each corner of the square is a roundel. Two at opposite corners each contain a little kneeling figure, one with a duck and the other a with hare or long-eared dog; the other two corners—roundels—each contain a kneeling figure,

helmeted, bearing a circular shield, both apparently in the act of throwing something. Between these four corner roundels are four baskets of old classic form, which complete the balance of ornament so characteristic in this type of pattern.

On another slide I have two other varieties of horsemen. One is set in a circular panel; He is riding swiftly, and stretches out his right hand. This figure is woven in brown wools picked out with yellow flax threads. The second specimen shows us a rider in a similar attitude, but his horse is walking gently. This later panel is from a tunic and is of extra-

FIG. 16.



Panel of Roman design from an Akhmîm tunic.

ordinarily fine texture, in which respect it is one of the most delicate of all the Akhmîm weavings; so small are the threads that they might easily be mistaken for silken ones, and not, as they actually are, flaxen and woollen. The ground generally is greenish blue; the horse is white, its trappings and the rider's boot are red. The square border to the circular centre is treated after the manner of Roman mosaics with fishes, birds, and fruits, amongst which last is a pomegranate. The panel beneath is about one and quarter inch square, probably a *tabula* from an infant's tunic; it is equally delicate in texture, and is wrought in "purple wool" and flax threads. The horse and rider is a class of subject analogous to such as

delighted Sidonius Appollinaris, who enthusiastically describes Persian stuffs imported at his time (5th century) into Europe. He writes:—"Bring forth brilliant cushions and stuffs . . . on which, produced by a miracle of art, we behold the fierce Parthian, with his head turned back, on a prancing steed; now escaping, now returning, to hurl his spear; by turns fleeing from and putting to flight wild animals whom he pursues." Exactly the same kind of subject is reproduced on some pieces of Græco-Scythic goldsmiths' work found in the Crimea. These relics of a semi-barbarous art are now preserved in the Hermitage at St. Petersburg. They probably date from the 3rd century B.C.

This next diagram is taken from what remains of a Roman glass disc ornamented with gold work. A large roundel with the head, perhaps of St. Paul, occupies the centre, whilst at each corner was a smaller medallion containing heads. The intervening space is filled with a scale ornament. This is one of those rare specimens of glass found in the catacombs and now preserved in the Christian Museum at Rome. Again, the planning of the ornament is very similar to that of a square from an Akhmîm tunic. Here (Fig. 17) we have a large central roundel with a chimerical beast, and at each corner a small roundel containing a head. Between them are lunette or semicircular devices; the edge is of classic wave pattern.

From Barcelona in Spain, and probably of the 3rd century, we have one of a number of mosaics found there. The subject I have selected is that of an ostrich surrounded by a laurel wreath.

On turning to Akhmîm, we find there a coloured weaving of precisely similar intention in decoration. Instead of an ostrich, however, we find a duck surrounded by a wreath. The colours in this specimen are remarkably brilliant, and the representation of the bird successfully given.

From old time the Egyptians were skilled in depicting birds. The two before us were painted on walls at Thebes, 2,000 B.C. Under Roman influence the Egyptians seem to have shown that they inherited some of the skill of their forefathers in this branch of depicting natural forms. Two more specimens of their bird drawing are to be seen in these two panels; that on the left is admirably preserved, it is of somewhat stouter weaving than that on the right, which has been so unfortunately torn; enough, however, remains of it for us to see

the excellent skill in rendering the head, breast, and a claw of a quail.

Few specimens of Akhmîm tapestry weavings supply us with Egyptian patterns or ornament represented in the conventional Egyptian manner. In the collection at South Kensington there is a heavy-looking *ankh* or *crux ansata*, the upper portion of which is circular instead of being pear shaped, whilst the *tau* cross is relatively disproportionate. Another piece of Akhmîm work, the ornament from the breast of a tunic, which I now show, contains three flowers resembling certain representations in Egyptian paintings of the

FIG. 17.



Panel of Roman design from Akhmîm tunic.

lotus flower. On the other hand, the adjacent little figure of a warrior bearing a shield does not suggest Egyptian treatment; it possibly is intended for an Ethiopian or Arab soldier such as was doubtless to be frequently seen at Akhmîm before Diocletian came up the Nile to destroy many towns, including Coptos, for the purpose of checking the rising power of Ethiopians and Arabs. If this be so, the ornament would probably have been made about the 2nd or 3rd century, A.D.

Upon comparing ornamental works, produced in different countries and at various times, with one another, we are often struck with some likeness which brings them into

relationship with one another either as regards subject or arrangement of details. This leads us to suppose, and sometimes rightly so, that the designers and art workmen of different nations have copied each other's works. We may therefore form a succession of kindred specimens exhibiting similar features, and thereby establish and demonstrate a theory of perpetuation or survival. In some cases no doubt the theory may have been pressed absurdly, and this perhaps is more frequently the case where the latest version in a theoretically successive series is seen to be quite different from its assumed origin. On the other hand, a design may have been produced by an artist of great skill working for patrons having very cultivated perceptions: such a design copied and re-copied may be found to have percolated into a country where a much lower standard of skill and perception existed. The version of the design producible in this latter country would be comparatively debased and barbaric. When history very distinctly proves that the highly and the less cultivated countries have come into contact with one another, the truth of the perpetuation or survival is established. The same remarks apply in respect of epochs of time respectively marked by rises and falls in artistic skill and perception. I have ventured to make these remarks as prefatory to bringing before you a few examples of Akhmîm textiles, the designs of which appear to be survivals of the same or similar groups of men and animals, and of the same or similar styles of treatment previously produced and adopted in other countries or at earlier times.

The first of these examples is of a man fighting a lion. A dignified rendering of this subject occurs in a sculpture, probably of the 6th century B.C., from Persepolis. This is said to represent Xerxes, or some Persian monarch, stabbing a lion. It is the work of some of the many skilled sculptors who were employed upon the erection of the palace there. The king has seized the rearing lion by a tuft on his head, and is stabbing him with a sword. The rectangular space that this group adorned naturally affected the designer in the composition and arrangement of the group. From Akhmîm we have a circular ornament from a tunic, and a circular space would necessarily modify the arrangement of a corresponding group of figures if such were placed within it. In the centre of this rosette we see a rude design of a wild-

looking man running a lion through with a spear. Thus, whilst there is some likeness between the subjects of these two specimens, there is a very wide difference between the two representations of the subject, not only in regard to pose and details, but also in treatment. How far, if at all, the Akhmîm designer was indebted to a percolation from Persia of the sculptured lion slayer I do not pretend to say. History, however, has told us of the constant communication in past ages which Egypt had with Persia.

Again, amongst the ruins at Persepolis is a group of a lion springing on to the back of a species of horse. A few centuries later in date, less naturalistically portrayed and of uncultured conventionality, is a piece of beaten gold work which was found at Kertch in the Crimea, and is classified as being of Græco-Scythic workmanship. It is perhaps the tip of a sword scabbard or of a quiver for arrows. Here we have a lion, after the nature of such beasts, attacking a stag, having pinned him at the back of his neck. A square panel from an Akhmîm tunic supplies us with a panther similarly seizing a long-horned goat, or ibex. The arrangement of the groups in each of these instances is alike. It is, however, one which would be obvious to any designer living in a country where savage animals abound and prey upon weaker ones. The representations of it, therefore, may have no relations to one another such as might link them together as types of a series sprung from a single source.

Amongst the wall-paintings of Beni Hassan, some 2,000 B.C., is the representation of a fig-tree, with monkeys in it picking the fruit. The formal shape of the tree is peculiar, and suggests a comparison with an Akhmîm design of probably 2,300 years later. Are the two shapes, in which the spreading branches are so arranged as to produce very similar ornamental effects, merely coincidences? In the Akhmîm design we have a tree shooting up from a vase of classic form and decoration. A grotesque female figure stands in the forked main trunk or stem; lower down near the lip of the vase are two birds, one on each side of the stem. By the side of this vase and vine is a pointed oval shape—a panel from a wrapper, composed of a similar formal arrangement of a vine.

Processions of animals were wrought by Assyrian metal engravers upon metal plates or plateaux, such as are in the British Museum. Somewhat analogous to these are bands of

animals painted upon early Greek and Etruscan vases. To some extent the decorative intention in thus using animals appears in Akhmîm patterns. The two bands now shown are woven in brown worsteds upon a tunic. There are certainly lions amongst these animals, and probably dogs, hares, and ibexes. The lions occur the more often (I would ask you to notice the shape of the lion's manes). Does the frequent occurrence of the lion in such a pattern illustrate the effect upon a designer of the hunting exploits told of such Egyptian monarchs as Amenophis III. (18th dynasty), who for ten years hunted lions in the Mesopotamian plains, killing 102 of them with his own hand, and subsequently marrying a daughter of his host, the King of Mesopotamia?

In the 10th and 11th centuries ivory carvers converted elephants tusks into oliphants, or hunting horns, enriching them with representations of animals. Here we have two views of the same horn, or oliphant. The carving is usually called Byzantine, but this is not, of course, to be taken as meaning that the carvers practised their art in Byzantium or Constantinople only. Byzantine influence extended to Egypt, and as much of the ivory from India and elsewhere passed through Alexandria for Europe, some of the carving on it may have been done there.

There is, I think, some likeness in style between the animals on this horn and those in the Akhmîm specimen, which latter, however, is probably work of the 2nd or 3rd century, and therefore 700 or 800 years earlier in date. And now going back another 800 years earlier still, we may glance at the engraving of a Græco-Assyrian bowl found in Cyprus. Here we have a variety of subjects. Those on the outer border relate to the labours of Hercules, those on the inner border have to do with Egypt, whilst the centre is filled in with some incident of Egyptian warfare. But it is to the peculiar treatment of the lions' manes in the outer border that I wish to direct your attention, on account of its likeness to that of the same details in the Akhmîm specimen.

A representation of Rameses II. about to slay a kneeling captive whose hair he grasps, occurs in an Egyptian wall-painting done 800 years earlier than the Cyprus bowl. The similarity between this group and that in the centre of the Cyprus bowl is obvious.

And now turning to a square panel formerly on an Akhmîm cloth, we have another version of such a subject. The group here consists of a man slaying a captive; the man, armed with

a short naked sword, wears a blue Phrygian cap and red scarf; he is holding the hair of his victim. This latter seems to be dressed in a tunic spotted with circles. Do these represent chain armour or are they merely a pattern? Is the incident one of a Roman or a Palmyrene slaying a Persian—as indeed freely happened in the 3rd century A.D., during the war waged against the Persians, when the Emperor Valerian was taken prisoner by Sapor II., a monarch of the Sassanian dynasty of Persia? or is the group a survival of Egyptian tradition concerning Rameses II.?

The mention of a Sassanian king brings us to a specimen of Akhmîm weaving, in which I think the relationship between Akhmîm, Sassanian, and later Roman, or Roman-Byzantine design, can be seen in a more direct and certain manner than that of the previously suggested relationships. The figure before us of a draped angel wearing a diadem or jewelled cap, and holding a wreathed cross, was evidently one of a pair (Fig. 18, p. 22). It measures about 2 ft. 3 in. long from the centre of the wreath to the feet of the angel, so that the two figures, as originally woven, would have covered a space of 4 ft. 6 in. A device of this size was for use on some cloth or hanging, and looking to its religious symbolism, the group was no doubt used on a church hanging, probably an altar cloth in some Christian Coptic church of the 4th or 5th centuries. But it was in use in Rome in Trajan's time, as the angels upon the pedestal of his great column testify. Similar figures (Fig. 19, p. 22) also occur in the spandrels of the arch to the rock sculptures at Kermanschah, about sixty miles north of Bagdad, in Persia. These sculptures are of Sassanian or Perso-Roman style, and are commonly known as the "Throne of Rustem." They are probably almost contemporary with the Akhmîm angel. The winged females in them have the same pose as the Akhmîm angel. They wear the same sort of jewelled head-dress or diadem. Each, however, in her right hand holds a wreath, and a cup in her left, details having no Christian significance, and not seen in the Akhmîm specimen. Between the two figures is the crescent, an emblem in solar and fire worship, also of Ashtaroth, and adopted later on by Mohammedans as a symbol. Similar in pose and arrangement to the Akhmîm angel are two carved upon a Roman-Byzantine ivory diptych of the 6th century, the original of which is in the Public Museum at Ravenna. The subjects on the

lower portion of the diptych (not here shown) are Christian. As might be supposed, even were this ivory specimen not before us, the treatment of the figures, drapery and wings, is more delicate and artistically complete than

FIG. 18.



Figure of an angel woven in coloured worsted and flax threads from Akhmîm.

that of either the Akhmîm or the Sassanian specimens.

When, at an earlier part of this lecture, we considered the tunics and their decoration, I referred to the bands of ornament wrought into the cuffs. There is a considerable variety of

FIG. 19.



Diagram of Sassanian sculptures at Kermanschah, Persia.

them. But as they consist almost entirely of waved leafy stems I do not propose to make many remarks upon them in detail. I have selected a few as examples, and will pass them rapidly before you, together with bands of similar patterns, but of rather larger dimensions, which were used on cloths.

Beginning with three of the broader bands for cloths we have patterns such as these. The first is a single continuous waved stem with vine leaves and bunches of grapes, placed between the wavings of the stem. The next to it consists of two waved stems, with vine leaves and tendrils, divided by a straight stem. The third is of a more open-waved stem, with a pair of leaves, perhaps fig leaves, placed in each wave.

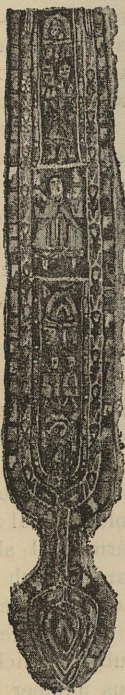
In another series, which is of cuff bands, we have bands in pairs. The first is small in pattern and formal in style of ornament. The middle one is made up of a series of repeated single vine leaves on a thick stem with one or two grapes. The last one is of a continuous waved stem of vine leaves. This is bordered on each side with an edging of little stem and ball devices.

The last of the cuff bands contains double bands of continuous and waved ivy stem pattern, which is much in the style of such favourite classic patterns. The second pair of bands is ornamented with a number of *amphora* shaped vases, of a Roman character. The third small band has a single continuous waved stem with alternate trefoils and bunches of berries.

In making up my notes for this lecture I intended to have touched upon the Christian symbols to be seen in some of the Akhmîm specimens. But this branch of the subject is a large one, although the specimens themselves may not be very numerous. Of course the vine and grapes might be claimed as Christian emblems. On the other hand, long before Christianity reached Upper Egypt the vine had been cultivated there, and a waved stem, with leaves and fruits springing from it was a device often used for ornamental bands and borders by Greeks and Romans. So that patterns of like construction with vine leaves are not by any means to be taken as necessarily implying Christian influence in their production. The whale which occurs in Roman-Christian sculptures and wall-paintings in connection with Jonah as typifying the Resurrection, was also woven sometimes at Akhmîm. But the more distinctly Christian designs from Akhmîm are such as contain figures with uplifted hands, which I think must be accepted as *orantes* of Christian meaning. In other pieces we meet with figures of saints which, as I have said, have been identified as St. George, St. Paul of Thebes, St. Christopher, St. Demetrius, and so forth. There seems to be no doubt about these. The rendering, however, of these

Christian subjects is, as a rule, barbaric, and cannot compare with that of the Roman designs, or of those which appear to have a Persian or Syrian source. Two of such quaintly barbarous pieces I have selected, and now place before you. The colours of the worsteds are bright; scarlet and crimson predominate in the left-hand specimen. That on the right is rather sombre in tone, although the blues and greens are vivid. Both are parts of tunic bands,

FIG. 20.

Band or *clavus* of Coptic design from Akhmim.

comparatively short bands with rounded ends, reaching to about the waist of the dress. This form of band we noted as being apparently of a later date altogether than that of those having Græco-Roman patterns. The principal figure in the band on the left is of a woman with a *nimbus* about her head; she is richly robed, and carries in her right hand a sort of floral staff, or it may be a *flabellum*. Beneath her left hand, which points upwards, is the rudely-drawn figure of a little child. It is thought that the two represent the Virgin and Child. Above them are two groups of people; the upper one of all may illustrate the miracle of making the blind to see, as one of the figures is raising his hand to the face of the man next him. The lower group is possibly intended for making the dumb to speak or the deaf to

hear. Below the Virgin and child are other figures, the first set of which may be for the making of the lame to walk; one figure gesticulates to another who is leaning on a stick. The lowest group of figures may perhaps be meant for dumb persons who have recovered the use of their tongues, to which two of them seem to be pointing. The only parallel to this style of debased drawing that occurs to me is that of Coptic missal illumination, a small specimen of which is in the South Kensington Museum. The figures in the second band (Fig. 20) are rather more distinct; the central one is a Christian, in a tunic and cloak, in act of prayer, with both hands uplifted in accordance with the attitude which prevailed with Christians of the 3rd and 5th centuries. Below the praying Christian is a device something like a hive with ears. This I believe to be intended for a temple, for the upper part of it rests upon two pillars. The earlike excrescences from the roof are, it is suggested by a friend, possibly intended for the pointed constructions erected on Egyptian buildings of all periods, to catch the wind and convey it into the interiors. They are called *mulqufs*. In the edgings to both pieces will be seen a succession of petal forms or buds. This is an ornament which occurs in the 6th century wall mosaics at Ravenna and at Rome.

The circular panels on the tunics adorned with short rounded shoulder bands are equally rude in design. Here are two of them. In the left-hand one we find four figures holding scarfs above their heads; between them are temples—the construction and details of which are more clearly shown here than in the band on the previous slide. The little device in front of the temple seems to be meant for a tree. The right-hand panel, of which only half remains more or less intact, contains the familiar group of a horseman with his dog and the animal he is hunting. This is repeated in reverse. Ornament of this class is to be seen in silken specimens from Alexandria of the 8th and 9th century. Anastasius Bibliothecarius, the librarian of the Vatican, in the 9th century, and author of the *Liber Pontificalis*, describes the patterns woven in such silks over and over again. A distinctive feature in them was a series of circles, each one containing either a bird or an animal, flowers or trees, men on horseback, swords, &c. For instance in his “Lives of the Popes,” Anastasius writes of stuffs figured with men and horses, “*Homines et caballos*,” and describes a dress with wheels or circular panels

and men, "*Vestem cum rotis, et hominibus,*" &c. It is probably from such that Akhmîm tapestry-weavers at this period took many of their designs.

FIG. 21

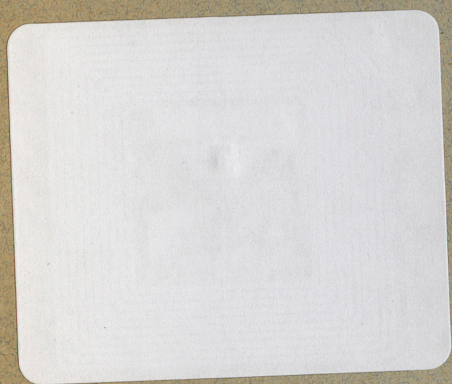


Examples of these are given in bits of Akhmîm weaving done in much larger pieces than those of the Græco-Roman and Persian type. The upper right-hand specimen in this slide (Fig. 21) gives us a portion of a large weaving, the pattern of which consisted of a series of large and small circular bands filled in with floral ornament. The employment of repeated circular bands or medallions has been referred to, and this type of pattern was very greatly in vogue for costumes and ornaments classed as Byzantine, from the 8th to the 12th centuries. We have another version of it in the lower long strip, the circles containing pairs of mounted archers, a device which carries us back to Persia. On the upper left of the slide we have a sort of trellis pattern, and within the diamonds or squares are medallions and the very favourite

quatrefoil and square device of Byzantine ornament; whence, therefore, we may conclude that all these last Akhmîm specimens were woven about the 8th to the 10th centuries.

This concludes the series of varied designs which I have selected to bring before you. I feel that I have attempted to crowd too much into this second lecture, and that I have taxed your patience too far. In these circumstances I can hardly venture to encroach further upon your time. Summing up in the fewest words, I may perhaps say that the Akhmîm designs seem to be capable of classification into groups which display typical ornaments from the 2nd century A.D. to the 10th century. There may be a few which point to a still earlier date. Looking to the numerous different foreign influences which passed over Akhmîm, in common with the whole of Egypt, there appears to be no reason why such should not be the case. The mere process of tapestry or comb-weaving dates, as we have seen, from the 3rd and 4th centuries, B.C., and it is principally by that process that most of the specimens were woven.

I may be allowed to draw your attention to the capital coloured *fac-similes* which have been published by Mr. Griggs for the Department of Science and Art. I hope to continue my inquiries about these most valuable links in the history of ornamental art with which we have been concerned. I shall very greatly value any assistance which may be given to me in this direction, as I feel that at present I have scarcely done more than touch the outskirts of a subject which is intermingled with an enormous number of incidents and conditions connected with a long period of time.





CLEVELAND MUSEUM OF ART



3 3032 00333 8294

